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NEGLECTED ARABIA

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A Visit Along the Coast

REV. G. D. VAN PEURSEM

FOR a long time it has been my desire to visit the villages along the coast southeast of Maskat. Although an opportunity presented itself for such a tour during the Christmas festivities, I did not feel that I could leave Maskat at that time. Then came the week of prayer, which only under rare circumstances I could afford to miss. However, on January 12th we left by sailboat for Koriat, the first important village thirty-five miles from Maskat. Before we arrived half way the wind was strong and the waves beat high and they roared angrily. The boat was not large but the sail tremendous, so we made time. But suddenly the rudder jumped off its hinge—as these rudders have a habit of doing—and the wind whipped the sail and nearly upset the boat. But like minute men the sailors loosed the ropes and lowered the sail. Though we were bobbing up and down for twenty minutes, the rudder was replaced and a smaller one hoisted, then we proceeded, though more slowly, and with less joviality and not without some anxiety. Our landing was made with difficulty in a small canoe, but no damage was done here except that our clothes and bedding got wet. Paul's voyage and shipwreck mean more to me since I have become acquainted with sailboats.

In Koriat we were entertained by the Wali. He seemed greatly honored by our visit. His specialty did not seem to me to be religion. When I opened religious discussion he had the habit of leaving. Asking why he repeatedly did this, the men told me that he went out to have a smoke. There was only one among his men who made any objection to Christianity and he must have been the religious leader. Most of them said that our religion is like theirs, although they know very well that we have no place for Mohammed. The Wali has thirty soldiers under him and their main occupation is eating dates and drinking coffee and escorting him on his morning walks. I was asked to walk with him one morning. At three different places we squatted on the ground for the purpose of eating dates and drinking coffee. Waste

of time has no meaning to them. They do not waste it for they have nothing to do. The fishermen, however, know their luck; before the East turns to red, they are far out at sea, and at noon bring in their draught of fish, minnows, sardines, sharks, etc. But they, too, are quite content to sit when the wind blows for days and they cannot catch fish.

The next village we visited was Doghmar. I had a letter to the head man of the village and when he read it he said, "On my head and eye," which means, "Leave it to me." He gave us a room six by eight feet in a date stick house, but it was the best he had. He is an old man who had lately married a second wife who was a kind of servant in the house. When the elder wife was down with fever, I noticed the younger took the care of the children, although it was evident not as a mother would. The host slept in the cramped quarters with us and watched our movements. "What a wonderful thing a camp cot is!" "A lantern!" "What fuss these people make over their beds!" Such comments must have come to his mind as he scrutinized us. He thought my prayer before retiring very short and simple. I did not observe any ablutions; did not face Mecca nor change my posture in prayer. These were no doubt serious omissions, but the fact that I prayed put me in a class with all good Muslims.

The only person in the village able to read with any degree of fluency was the village schoolmistress. She put the men to shame. She willingly accepted a Gospel of Matthew, and there is no reason why the first chapter on the manner of Christ's birth and the sermon on the Mount should not be intensely interesting to her. Here we hired a small sailboat, small enough to respond to the oar as well as to the wind and sail. This could be hauled on shore in stormy weather. There was ample time and opportunity for reflection. For five solid hours we sat on that little boat, talking little but thinking a good deal. We passed many small villages and at sundown made a landing at Bema. I never anticipated such difficulty in getting the boat safely on shore. Some of the waves were about six feet high and although thirty men pulled with might and main, the boat was not safely landed between waves. Just as the stern of the boat was on shore and higher than the bow, a wave rolled in and filled the boat. This time we kept our bedding dry by casting it ashore before the waves had filled the stern, but the charcoal was soaked.

At Bema the people stood very much aloof. We asked for the sheikh of the place but found that he was not in. No one, not even the boys were willing to guide us to his dwelling. Of course no house was offered to us until I reminded them that their book offers great reward to the man who harbors a stranger even though he is of a different faith. One old fellow was more friendly than any, but he proved to be an Indian fakir making his way to Mecca and had come this far after two months' tramping. No doubt he expected some help from us, a pilgrim stranger to the forbidden cities. When we were comfortably settled for the night in a mud house I was called to see a young man stricken with malaria. I knew how his head was aching;

how his bones were twisting as if out of joint. We have all had it. He was more than grateful for some quinine and some salts. After sundown, although scarcely able to walk, he came to our house and said in a trembling voice, "Sir, if I were better I would not let you sleep here. I would want you in my house. But if you are here tomorrow noon you are to eat lunch with me." There was no doubt of his sincerity. It was like cold water in the desert. He was more like the real Arab.

It is difficult to imagine denser ignorance than we met in Bema. When I repeated, "In the beginning God created Heaven and Earth," five times and they seemed none the wiser, I began to sing the National Hymn in Arabic. They caught the words and asked me to sing it



A COTTON SPINNER AT SAFALA—OMAN

repeatedly. Only perpetual repetition will make an impression on these poor fishing villagers. In the morning the sheikh appeared. After making enquiries about me, he called me aside, and thinking I had inside information about politics asked me what benefit the nations were to them. I asked what nations he meant. Thereupon he said, "England, of course, the Sultan of Maskat is finished." I told him I was an American and thus had nothing to do with politics in Arabia. However, I said that I could not see why a Government should support the people and not the people the Government. This struck him as an idea so radical that he rose up and went and told me to do likewise. After

meeting the sheikh, it became very plain why the people were so peculiar. In all these places, "As the king so the people."

After Bema we were prepared to meet almost anything. We had no reason to expect a better reception at the next village. A landing was made, again at sundown. The boat was not dragged on shore this time, there being no people to assist in the difficult operation. The waves were not high but they rolled. One of the sailors offered to carry me ashore. As I was well perched on his shoulders, he lost his balance and I plunged into the water. I had fortunately removed my shoes and coat so that when I landed I could at least put them on dry. The boatmen begged for permission to return although they had promised to take us to Sur, fifteen miles farther. But we dismissed them; we were as weary of them as they of us. On our return I learned that they lay along this shore four days because of contrary winds.

The people of Kalhat—where we had now landed—were expecting their sheikh from Maskat. When they spied our sail they came to the sea to welcome him. This was our good fortune. They did not seem disappointed that we came and not the sheikh. Immediately I saw that the people were different from those of Bema of the night before. We did not ask for a house. They offered one and were glad to entertain us. I think they took pity on us as we stood shivering on the seashore. The boys saddled our luggage and we were made to feel at home. A splendid dinner was prepared and after eating it we felt none the worse for the trip.

Kalhat is a very old town, nestled in the hollow of towering rocks, twenty minutes from the sea. A large proportion of the people can read and write, and the former missionaries and especially Ibrahim the colporteur are well remembered. We sold some Bible portions but the demand was for books on history, poetry and medicine. They were exceedingly anxious to know the affairs of the nations—and especially of Mesopotamia, Turkey and Syria. They get all their news from hearsay and it is surprising how much they know, although much is misinformation.

After spending the night in Kalhat, we left by donkey for Sur, the largest place on the East coast of Oman. Inquiring about the distance and difficulty of the trip, we received as many different answers as we asked questions. Some said we could make it in one hour, some two and others four. They think as little of distance as the cow-punchers of Wyoming, and they have no more accurate conception of the length of an hour than we get from the expression, "A little while." This is only natural as they have no watches and do not have to catch any trains. It took us actually five hours and the donkeys went on the trot.

Sur must have a population of not less than 10,000 for they tell me there are about 2,000 houses. The city sends out 100 large sail vessels and 2,000 smaller craft to India, Basrah, Aden and Port Said. It is situated at the mouth of a winding river which forms an ideal protection for native craft in windy weather. It is an old city. Col.

Miles says it is the prototype of ancient Tyre on the Mediterranean. He says it was the ancient distributing center for commerce between India and Babylonia. But for the lack of roads across the desert to the Red Sea, it might have retained its ancient prestige.

I presented a letter of introduction from the Sultan of Maskat to the Wali. He received us royally and entertained us lavishly. He is not yet forty years of age, but quite able to perform the task laid upon him. I understand his main qualities are sociability and liberality. The kitchen fire never goes out and the coffee pot is never cold. Dates and coffee are ever in order, the first thing in the morning and the last in the evening. This is a *sine qua non* with the Bedouin tribes. A stingy ruler in Arabia is short lived. When the tribes from the desert come in and demand a sum of money he produces it. He is one with them, on the hunt and in the house. It is quite plain that this is the secret of his success. He was equally free and easy with me. I naturally took advantage of his openness in presenting some Christian truth. He was not at all fanatic. It was quite plain, however, that he had objection to religious discussion in the presence of the other men. He said such discussions did not benefit. They would never become Christians and we would never become Muslems. I therefore refrained from such discussion in public but did not lose the opportunity when I was alone with him. He accepted as a present a leather bound New Testament and promised to read it.

The second day at Sur we went to a house of mourning. An influential merchant, lately returned from our hospital in Bahrein, had passed away. The custom prevails there as in Maskat, that when a death occurs the relatives remain in seclusion for three days, during which time people come to mourn with them. Custom demands that they kill the fatted calf at this time. It is an abominable custom and a great burden to the bereaved relatives. A death is made an occasion of feasting as well as mourning. We were ushered into a dark room where no less than fifty men sat, repeating the first Sura of the Koran and praying for the departed and his relatives. At noon the biggest Arab dinner was given I have seen since coming to Maskat. If this was any indication of their lavish entertainment, they must have slaughtered numbers of sheep and oiled bags of rice. As we left the house one could see squads of men squatting on the ground taking it all in. There was not much chance for a message here for I was a perfect stranger. I thought them quite liberal to let this strange Christian in at all. However, I related some death bed experiences of my own relatives, showing thereby that death need not be a loss but a distinct gain. This, according to Muslem thought, is anomalous, for Allah may not choose to give the deceased that bliss he imagines is awaiting him. Hence the prayer for the dead. Even after death, man's fate is in the hands of the great artificer. There is no assurance, no "Let not our heart be troubled," no song but a dirge at a Muslem funeral. To attend one of them is a painful experience.

The last day in Sur was spent in a rich Arab's house. This man was also planning to go to our Bahrein hospital for a much-needed

operation. He and his son were very busy bringing planks, rigging, etc., of a steamship that had partly foundered near Ras-Al-Had two years ago. He bought it for 5,000 Maria Theresa dollars from the Bedouin sheikhs who had received it from the British as a present. He plans to take the parts to Bombay and sell them for three times that price. His son was most interesting in the questions he asked us. Here are some of them: "Are the nations still at war? Has Mesopotamia independence now? Have the Americans discovered the North Pole? Have they reached the moon with their aeroplanes? Where is the darkness? Our book says that Alexander the Great went to a place of darkness. Who built the pyramids?" Among all his questions none was about the person of Jesus Christ. It was a most difficult task to wedge in Christian truth of any kind. He must have felt like another man in Sur, who, when I offered him a Gospel, said, "O, we want news about politics and business, things of the present. We have the book for the future life and that has abrogated all the religious books that went before." No doubt these are the sentiments of hundreds in Arabia.

Sur is a great missionary field. The fact that people travel all the way to Bahrein for relief from their ailments shows that they need and want our hospitals and doctors. It has a vast region of Bedouin population to the south and west. The trade routes lead to Inland Oman so that a doctor could start from there as well as from Matrah to visit the hinterland. I am told the climate is more healthful than that of Maskat. That is quite possible as the soil is sandy and there are no mountains near to stop the breezes in summer. The big problem is lack of sweet water. All drinking water is brought from Bilad—the place where the Wali resides—a distance of four miles. In summer this is a *burning question*. The missionary who could get the people to agree to put in a pumping system and erect a tank on the rock half way between, would bestow an untold blessing upon the place, and it would give him an influence invaluable in the future.

To think that in all these villages there is no witness for the Gospel brings one to his knees. A visit to them reemphasizes the fact that Christ only supplies the needs of the human heart. "And this is life eternal that they should know Thee, the only true God."



The First Lady of the Land

MISS RUTH JACKSON

AS the jolly boat was poled up to the rough stone dock at the Island of Moharrek a large group of Arabs gathered to watch the white ladies land. As we walked through the dark covered streets of the bazaar we were closely scanned by all the little shop keepers squatting among their wares and by all the customers who stood bargaining in the street. Beyond the bazaar was a large white building, hardly a palace yet surely more than an ordinary house for here dwells the head lady of the islands of Bahrein. Likely her husband, the ruling sheikh, dwells also within the walls but he is old now and the government is in the hands of a son. The house was distinguished from its neighbors only by the numerous retainers sitting in rows against the walls.

We passed between them through the gate into an open bare courtyard, no trees or grass or flowers or even ornamentation of any kind. Women received us and unbolted a door and bid us enter. The room had no windows and the walls were bare and rough. The floor was covered with rugs but there was no furniture except a fancy wooden chest which had several very dusty dishes under it. In one corner was a pile of baskets and bags of dates. Yet this was the reception room for special visitors of "Her Honor, the Sheikha." A hush fell upon the group of women welcoming us as a stately figure slowly approached, surveyed the room from the doorway, then advanced and with expressionless face went through the formal greetings to each guest, "Peace upon you"—"And upon you peace." This ruling lady is a very dignified woman with an imperative manner and a strong face that is sometimes impassive and sometimes flashing. As she seated herself and threw back her black abba, a loose dress of deep green, heavily embroidered with gold and spangles, was displayed. She gestured constantly and thus showed to advantage much heavy gold jewelry on her arms and large rings upon three fingers of each hand. The women of the household treated her with great respect, waited always for a sign of permission before approaching her and obeyed her least command instantly.

The smoke from a clay jar of incense soon perfumed the room and then a tray of Arab sweets and nuts was placed before us, followed by coffee and ginger tea. Lastly rose water was poured upon our hands and we settled back against the wall to sew and visit more informally. Bits of the conversation were translated to us and we watched our hostess' face as she told of her pilgrimage to Mecca and spoke of the slaves carried to the holy city to be sold. She mourned the loss of the good old days when slaves were bought for forty, sixty, a hundred rupees and made faithful servants. But now they are mostly worthless and say, "Let us go to the balliose (British official) and be freed." Medina, a black woman who serves the mission, spoke up and said it was not so nice for the slaves who like herself were stolen from their homes and carried into bondage in a strange land. We were surprised at the freedom with which a slave woman addressed the head lady of the land and was listened to by her. For Medina is

still legally a slave though not claimed by her master for fear of the balliose.

The Sheikha complained of the modern improvements such as the good roads in Bahrein but she laughed as she told about seeing a train on the western coast of Arabia. She desired to see the train work so she paid the railroad baksheesh and stood on the platform watching it but would not ride.

At noon the meal was brought and our hostess sat with us around the big mat and herself pulled the sheep's head to pieces, throwing tender pieces of it to us. She had the skull cracked open that she might serve us the brains. The special treat, in our opinion, was the bowl of delicious honey with lumps of fresh butter upon it. Near the end of the meal the Sheikha, with a gleam in her eye, called to several women outside the door, "Come and eat with the Christians." They all obeyed except an old Bedou who stalked off angrily muttering, "Shame." But the next time she passed she was forced to join us. The Sheikha inquired if she would like medicine for her head from the khatoons and she instantly said, "Yes." The Sheikha responded, "If you are not too good to take their medicine you are not too good to eat with them." And the laugh which followed did not please the Bedou but she enjoyed the feast after starting upon it. After a bowl of buttermilk had made the rounds we were left alone to eat fruit and enjoy a rest before "Her Honor" returned to have coffee again after her noon prayers. She requested that we visit her daughter-in-law who had been sick for two weeks. At the suggestion that perhaps only one, not all of us, should go since the girl was quite ill, she said it was their custom to receive just the same.

A servant took us to the house and Lulua rose from her bed to greet us, showing much pleasure at our visit. She is young and pretty with a very sweet face and gentle responsive manner. She asked us to sing a few favorite hymns for her and after refreshments were served she was asked if she would like to have the nurse come to treat her. "O, yes," she replied, "But did the Sheikha say the nurse might come? I would have had her long ago if I had my wish. But I am only as the ring upon her finger which she turns as she pleases." And later the Sheikha emphatically refused to allow the nurse.

We returned to bid farewell to our honorable hostess and she insisted that we enter and drink coffee again. Through the doorway we watched the activities in the courtyard. A camel loaded with water skins was relieved of his burden and a donkey walked off with a black kettle on his back so enormous that one of us could easily have sat within it.

When we said our farewells the Sheikha told us not to neglect her house but to return again. She had Medina and a servant of her own laden with gifts for us, large baskets of fruit and eggs which they balanced on their heads. Out past the retainers and through the bazaar we made our way to the jolly boat where we counted seventy-five people lined up to watch our departure.

The Call of Mesopotamia

DR. PAUL W. HARRISON

WHAT is the call of Mesopotamia? It is the call of a country with enormous possibilities, capable of being one of the richest and most productive areas of the world. It was so in the past.

Please God it will be so again. It is the call of the first Mohammedan state to be brought to the threshold of scientific truth, industrial organization, and modern civilization, an experience that waits inevitably for every backward state in the world. It is God's call to bring the promise and the blessing of Abraham to his present fellow countrymen and with God's blessing a call to set up the Church of Christ as a light that shall illuminate that whole country, and serve as a beacon for the whole Mohammedan world.

It is the call of a nation in transition. The war changed many countries. It transformed Mesopotamia. The political, social and



MESOPOTAMIAN WOMEN CARRYING FUEL

mental institutions of the Arab were pulverized. New ones of strange architecture are taking their place. There is no lack of political sagacity to guide the transition. The directing minds in the creation of this new state are British administrators, the best minds for that purpose that the world has to offer. There is no lack of earnest desire for progress on the part of the people themselves. Many of their ideas are crude and ill-digested, but their faces are set in the right direction. There is a thirst for Western education and a demand for schools which means that their feet are on the road of progress.

But what is it that makes real progress possible? Why is it that so many nations which long for the heights of modern civilization find themselves unable to make the ascent. Why is Persia still in the twilight of semi-barbarism. Why is India still a poor, illiterate, and

undeveloped country? There is only one thing that makes a nation's real progress possible, and that is a community of men who follow Jesus Christ among her citizens. It is this that elevates the standards of personal character, and co-operative altruism to such a height that modern civilization is possible. There is only one way to give Mesopotamia the foundation that she needs and that is to take her the Gospel of Christ, and to teach it to her patiently until Christ wins from that splendid people a community which shall leaven the whole lump.

The call of Mesopotamia is the call of an opportunity that will not last. Things are in flux now. They will harden in time. God has given us the opportunity and the responsibility of striking hard now while the iron is hot, as it will never be again. Schools they will have, if not Christian schools then some other kind. A philosophy of life they will find, if not Christ's then one from somewhere else. A religion they will get, if not the Gospel of Christ, then some other gospel. Now is the accepted time for Mesopotamia.

What is the challenge of Mesopotamia? The challenge of a job important beyond all words, of a job that will not wait, and of a job that is almost hopelessly difficult. The people are Mohammedans. Many have had their faith destroyed and are by so much the farther from any consideration of the claims of Christ. The war and the experiences following it have plunged the people into a current of materialism, and a worship of pleasure that is unique in the whole Near East. For many, the sanctions of the old religion are quite gone. Its hold is weakened on all. The world, the flesh and the devil hold undisputed sway. The former prestige of Christianity is gone. Christianity used to be hated because it was feared. Men recognized even when they would not admit it to themselves that it was a better religion than theirs. During the war they learned their mistake. They are sure now that the white man's religion is only another variation of the common universal species. Two hundred thousand Christian soldiers taught them so. Christ's prestige in Mesopotamia is gone.

It is a situation to be grappled with now. It makes little difference to us what political changes may be in store in the next fifty years; we deal with more permanent things. The people will remain. Their unrest and desire for spiritual leadership will remain. The current of progress will not turn backwards. Their need of the Gospel will remain. There is nothing temporary or changing in any of these factors. The cities will remain too, and whatever happens there will be sufficient stability in them to make work possible. It will take the heaviest artillery that we have. Schools will be needed, elementary schools, and high schools for both boys and girls; missionary hospitals will be needed. Missionaries in Mesopotamia are likely to be very unpopular people sometimes. A few stones and a few unsavory eggs should be reckoned a part of the pleasures of work out there. But there will be blessing in it, for it is God's work, and Christ Himself will be there with us.

Some Jewish Incidents

MISS JANE A. SCARDEFIELD

I. *A Betrothal*

ONE summer a tired missionary, seeking a few weeks' rest, boarded a river steamer for Baghdad. Among the passengers she found a sad-faced woman and her weak-looking little daughter. The missionary knew by the style of their dress that they were Jewesses, and poor. They welcomed a friendly smile and greeting and entered into a conversation with her. "Where are we going?" they repeated; "Oh, to Ezra's Tomb, with our relatives here." They indicated another group of Jews. "Those people," they continued, "are going on this pilgrimage to fulfill a religious vow."

"But those people look so rich and important. Are you truly related to them?" the missionary ventured to question.

"Yes," was the reply. "My husband died leaving me and my son and daughter dependent upon his brother. This rich woman is his brother's wife. As is our custom, my daughter must marry her cousin and a money consideration is always demanded of the bride. I have nothing to give them, so my daughter is to serve them until they consider it is time for the engagement, and then I shall become their servant until the sum demanded has been earned. If I cannot finish paying this debt, then my son must take up this burden, which is not a small one. Jews are very hard on each other," she added, "and demand the last farthing even of those who least can pay."

"How was it that your husband left you so very poor?"

The answer was a sad one. "You know that most of the Jewish men gamble and drink, and he died after a week of hard drinking in a house where much gambling was done. I never heard what his debts there were."

Just then a loud harsh command was given to this tired little girl to prepare lunch. This she hurried to do, and waited on the relatives as a most humble servant. After they had finished she ate the cold rice that was left from their meal.

II. *A Marriage*

"Where are you going, dressed so gaily?"

"Oh," replied the brightly dressed Jewish woman, "to a wedding. Do you not know that Rebecca's husband has taken a second wife?"

"How awful!" exclaimed the missionary. "Do Jews take two wives?"

"Oh yes, of course! You know Rebecca has no children and our law allows it in such cases."

"Where is the wedding to be, and who is the bride?"

"Come with us," she replied; "you will be welcome."

The house was soon reached. In a brightly decorated room there was seated on a large hard pillow on the floor a little girl, clothed in a white satin dress embroidered in gold, with a thin muslin veil over her head and face. This was the bride and she was only fourteen years

of age. Around her groups of women were standing, talking loudly and disputing about the wedding dowry. Then there was a hush. Through the door came a goodly number of men bringing the bridegroom. These all gathered at the farthest end of the room. A rabbi at once began reading the service in Hebrew, and the men chanted responses. Then a wine cup was passed to the men, who all drank from it. They then walked forward towards the bride, who stood up and received the cup from the hand of the groom. After sipping it she passed it to the mother of the groom, who returned it to him and he instantly threw it against the wall above the head of the bride where it broke and fell to the floor.

Thus were they married. Poor Rebecca would now have second place in her home after being a kind and faithful wife for fifteen years.

III. *A Mother*

"Will you come and see my sister? She is so miserable." So requested a Jewess one morning of her Christian friend. After some questioning it was learned that the sister's husband had beaten her. It was because her eyes were sore again and she was weak and ill. Since her second daughter was born more than a year ago he had not been kind to her, for he had said, "God has promised a son to every honorable Jew, and here is another girl baby!"

Within the courtyard, which was filthily dirty, there was a large group of Jewish women, all scolding. One especially loud-voiced woman had been reading from a book. Her manner and voice would have frightened a person well and strong, but here she was supposed to heal the sick. She did not want the Christian friend to see the sick woman, but the missionary was well known to most of the others in the courtyard, and so permission was given for her to sit beside the poor neglected woman who needed a real friend.

Soon the crowd of women left, for they considered their duty done. The sick one accepted medical help and told of her fear for the future, for she was very ill. After she became more quiet she allowed the Christian friend to pray for her and a visit was promised for the next day.

But oh! what a scene the next morning. On entering the room not a single person was to be seen, save the sick woman's sister, whose eyes were red with weeping. "What has happened?" was quickly asked.

"Oh, the very worst thing possible! Come over here and see!"

In a dark corner of the dirtiest room was the sick woman, and nearby two dear little forms lay sleeping. Twins, but girls, had been given to her during the night!

When the Christian friend exclaimed, "How lovely!" the sick mother groaned and sobbed aloud. Her sister explained that when the husband had heard the news he had gone off in a rage and they feared he would divorce her. The missionary asked to be allowed to take one of these most unwelcome baby girls, and both women said, "All right. After a few days we will bring it to you to care for and to keep always, if you wish."

The mother slowly recovered strength and the friend thought it almost time for the gift of the baby to be made. So she inquired when the child would be given.

"Oh," was the answer, "both babies are very ill, one from rat bites, we think. We will bring it tomorrow for you to see."

They did bring it and one look was enough to see that its life would soon flicker out, for the rats had bitten its little head badly and the bites had become infected. "How did this happen," they were asked, "and why was no word given of its need of care?"

"What could we do?" they said. Then one woman gave voice to their cruelty of heart by saying, "It will die, if God wills!"

A visit to the mother revealed the fact that she was compelled to neglect this little one in a dark, rat-infested room, uncared for and unfed for days, in hope that its death would lessen the anger of the husband, and so avoid a divorce.

IV. *A Widow*

Fulana is an interesting Jewess, especially to the missionaries. Twenty years ago, as a bright faced little girl she was in a class in the Bahrein school. She gave much promise then, for she loved to sing the Christian hymns and to learn the Gospel verses. The family seemed friendly. Much prayer was offered for them and it did seem that Fulana would accept for herself the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. She seemed so sincere, but her affection was all for the missionaries.

At an early age she was compelled to marry against her will, and she was lost sight of for two years. When again she came to see the missionary she was in great trouble. Her husband was ill, poor and in need of everything. Again she accepted friendship and help, attended prayer meetings and said she longed to be free from the terrible bondage the Jewish people were under. She was urged to step out on the promises of God and accept Christ as her Saviour. "Oh," she exclaimed, "it is not in my hands, but if my father will let me, I will."

When her father was spoken to, it was in vain. "What! You become a Christian and break our law! Better you should die than do such a thing!" Much more prayer was offered with her and for her, but, out of fear of family and friends, she would say the same: "It is not in my hands. I wish I could."

She became a widow with two little girls to support, and again the missionaries were her friends, helping her in many ways. She also served them to the utmost of the ability, always in a loving and devoted way. It often seemed that she must yield, for she knew the truth. One day she cried, "Oh, if my friends and family would only learn these truths as I have, it would be different, but they will not come to your mission, and there is none to teach them. When I tell them they will not listen, and alone I can never come out. They would kill me." It was a pitiful cry.

Who will give time and strength to these needy ones? The missionaries to the Moslems have their hands full, yet on every side are the Jews, needing friends to help and heal and teach them.

PERSONALIA

The many friends of the Arabian Mission will be grieved to learn of the death of the Rev. J. Preston Searle, D.D., at Cragmoor, New York, on July 26, 1922. Dr. Searle was closely connected with the Arabian Mission from its earliest formative period to the end of his life. As the Vice-President of the Board and the Chairman of its sub-committee on Arabia, the interests of this Mission were always very dear to him and never failed to secure his helpful co-operation. He will be greatly missed from the councils of the Trustees of the Arabian Mission.

Dr. S. M. Zwemer, in pursuance of the Five Year Program now being directed by the Joint Committee of the Boards and Societies doing missionary work amongst Moslems, has spent the summer and fall months in prolonged visits to Northern Africa and Malasia studying the Moslem conditions in Morocco and the Dutch East Indies. He will return to Cairo in November.

Dr. and Mrs. C. S. G. Mylrea, after an active furlough in this country, sailed from Philadelphia in June. Having spent a few months in England with relatives they sailed from London in September, expecting to break their journey in Cairo in order to attend an important meeting of The Committee on Survey of Christian Literature for Moslems, of which Dr. Mylrea is a member. They expect to arrive at their station, Kuwait, in December.

Rev. James E. Moerdyk, Rev. and Mrs. Bernard Hakken and Mr. George Gosselink sailed from New York on August 15th, expecting to arrive at their destination, Basrah, in time for the Annual Meeting of the Mission early in October.

Rev. and Mrs. G. D. Van Peurseem are expecting to return to this country on their furlough this fall. Mrs. Van Peurseem's state of health making it desirable that they should avail themselves of their furlough without delay.

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